

Fall of Jericho

Scripture Reading — Joshua 6:1-20

When the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded . . . “Shout! For the Lord has given you the city!” — Joshua 6:16

Do you know what a shofar is? It’s a ram’s horn trumpet used by the ancient Israelites when they engaged in battle. Though you wouldn’t guess it from its simple shape, the shofar gives a sound like the piercing call of a bugle.

God commands the people of Israel to destroy Jericho, the first city they encounter in the promised land. They march around the city for six days, and on the seventh day, when the Israelite army hears the blast of the shofar, they all shout. Then the walls of Jericho come crumbling down, and the Israelites charge in and take the city.

As you read about this, don’t picture a huge, terrifying, well-trained army outside the walls. They were few, weary and weak. The people of Jericho were probably laughing at them—until the walls crumbled. This event was meant as theater, an announcement. God was making something dramatically clear: these were his people, and he alone was giving the land to them.

As we march toward Christmas, we see that the ultimate fulfillment of God’s promises is not in military triumph. In Jesus, God’s promises expand beyond Israel to include all people. The victory is over sin and death, and the Lord of this victory is the Prince of Peace, the peace of God that surpasses all understanding.

Prayer

Father in heaven, battle cries rage in the world around us. Give us the peace that surpasses all understanding through the Prince of Peace, our Savior, Jesus. Amen.

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